# Beauty and the Beast

folktales of Aarne-Thompson-Uther type 425C
translated and/or edited by

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## Contents

Links open in new windows.

1. Beauty and the Beast (Reconstructed from various European sources by Joseph Jacobs).
2. Link to Beauty and the Beast (France, Jeanne-Marie LePrince de Beaumont). This is the classic version of the story, first published in 1757.
3. Link to The Story of the Beauty and the Beast (France, Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve -- as translated by J. R. Planché in Four and Twenty Fairy Tales: Selected from Those of Perrault and Other Popular Writers [London: G. Routledge and Company, 1858], pp. 225-325).
4. Link to Beauty and the Beast (France, Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve -- as abridged and retold by Andrew Lang in *The Blue Fairy Book*, 5th edition [London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1891], pp. 100-119).
5. The Small-Tooth Dog (England, Sidney Oldall Addy).
6. Rose (Irish-American).
7. The Summer and Winter Garden (Germany, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm).
8. Link to The Singing, Springing Lark (Germany, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm).
9. The Clinking Clanking Lowesleaf (Germany, Carl and Theodor Colshorn).
10. The Little Nut Twig (Germany, Ludwig Bechstein).
11. Little Broomstick (Germany, Ludwig Bechstein).
12. Link to The Enchanted Frog (Germany, Carl and Theodor Colshorn).
13. Beauty and the Horse (Denmark, J. Christian Bay).
14. The Singing Rose (Austria, Ignaz and Joseph Zingerle).
15. The Bear Prince (Switzerland, Otto Sutermeister).
16. Beauty and the Beast (Basque).
17. Zelinda and the Monster (Italy, Thomas Frederick Crane).
18. The Snake-Prince (Greece, Lucy M. J. Garnett).
19. The Enchanted Tsarévich (Russia, Alexander Afanasyev).
20. The Fairy Serpent (China, Adele M. Fielde).
21. Links to related sites.
    - Additional tales.
    - External sites.

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Return to D. L. Ashliman's **folktexts**, a library of folktales, folklore, fairy tales, and mythology.

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## Beauty and the Beast

### Joseph Jacobs

There was once a merchant that had three daughters, and he loved them better than himself. Now it happened that he had to go a long journey to buy some goods, and when he was just starting he said to them, "What shall I bring you back, my dears?"

And the eldest daughter asked to have a necklace; and the second daughter wished to have a gold chain; but the youngest daughter said, "Bring back yourself, papa, and that is what I want the most."

"Nonsense, child," said her father, "you must say something that I may remember to bring back for you."

"So," she said, "then bring me back a rose, father."

Well, the merchant went on his journey and did his business and bought a pearl necklace for his eldest daughter, and a gold chain for his second daughter; but he knew it was no use getting a rose for the youngest while he was so far away because it would fade before he got home. So he made up his mind he would get a rose for her the day he got near his house.

When all his merchanting was done he rode off home and forgot all about the rose till he was near his house; then he suddenly remembered what he had promised his youngest daughter, and looked about to see if he could find a rose. Near where he had stopped he saw a great garden, and getting off his horse he wandered about in it till he found a lovely rosebush; and he plucked the most beautiful rose he could see on it. At that moment he heard a crash like thunder, and looking around he saw a huge monster -- two tusks in his mouth and fiery eyes surrounded by bristles, and horns coming out of its head and spreading over its back.

"Mortal," said the beast, "who told you you might pluck my roses?"

"Please, sir," said the merchant in fear and terror for his life, "I promised my daughter to bring her home a rose and forgot about it till the last moment, and then I saw your beautiful garden and thought you would not miss a single rose, or else I would have asked your permission."

"Thieving is thieving," said the beast, "whether it be a rose or a diamond; your life is forfeit."

The merchant fell on his knees and begged for his life for the sake of his three daughters who had none but him to support them.

"Well, mortal, well," said the beast, "I grant your life on one condition: Seven days from now you must bring this youngest daughter of yours, for whose sake you have broken into my garden, and leave her here in your stead. Otherwise swear that you will return and place yourself at my disposal."

So the merchant swore, and taking his rose mounted his horse and rode home.

As soon as he got into his house his daughters came rushing round him, clapping their hands and showing their joy in every way, and soon he gave the necklace to his eldest daughter, the chain to his second daughter, and then he gave the rose to his youngest, and as he gave it he sighed.

"Oh, thank you, father," they all cried.

But the youngest said, "Why did you sigh so deeply when you gave me my rose?"

"Later on I will tell you," said the merchant.

So for several days they lived happily together, though the merchant wandered about gloomy and sad, and nothing his daughters could do would cheer him up till at last he took his youngest daughter aside and said to her, "Bella, do you love your father?"

"Of course I do, father, of course I do."

"Well, now you have a chance of showing it"; and then he told her of all that had occurred with the beast when he got the rose for her. Bella was very sad, as you can well think, and then she said, "Oh, father, it was all on account of me tha you fell into the power of this beast; so I will go with you to him; perhaps he will do me no harm; but even if he does -- better harm to me than evil to my dear father."

So next day the merchant took Bella behind him on his horse, as was the custom in those days, and rode off to the dwelling of the beast. And when he got there and they alighted from his horse the doors of the house opened, and what do you think they saw there! Nothing. So they went up the steps and went through the hall, and went into the dining room, and there they saw a table spread with all manner of beautiful glasses and plates and dishes and napery, with plenty to eat upon it. So they waited and they waited, thinking that the owner of the house would appear, till at last the merchant said, "Let's sit down and see what will happen then." And when they sat down invisible hands passed them things to ea and to drink, and they ate and drank to their heart's content. And when they arose from the table it arose too and disappeared through the door as if it were being carried by invisible servants.

Suddenly there appeared before them the beast who said to the merchant, "Is this your youngest daughter?"

And when he had said that it was, he said, "Is she willing to stop here with me?"

And then he looked at Bella who said, in a trembling voice, "Yes, sir."

"Well, no harm shall befall you." With that he led the merchant down to his horse and told him he might come that day each week to visit his daughter. Then the beast returned to Bella and said to her, "This house with all that therein is is yours; if you desire aught, clap your hands and say the word and it shall be brought unto you." And with that he made a sort of bow and went away.

So Bella lived on in the home with the beast and was waited on by invisible servants and had whatever she liked to eat and to drink; but she soon got tired of the solitude and, next day, when the beast came to her, though he looked so terrible, she had been so well treated that she had lost a great deal of her terror of him. So they spoke together about the garden and about the house and about her father's business and about all manner of things, so that Bella lost altogether her fear of the beast. Shortly afterwards her father came to see her and found her quite happy, and he felt much less dread of her fate at the hands of the beast.

So it went on for many days, Bella seeing and talking to the beast every day, till she got quite to like him, until one day the beast did not come at his usual time, just after the midday meal, and Bella quite missed him. So she wandered about the garden trying to find him, calling out his name, but received no reply. At last she came to the rosebush from which her father had plucked the rose, and there, under it, what do you think she saw! There was the beast lying huddled up without any life or motion. Then Bella was sorry indeed and remembered all the kindness that the beast had shown her; and she threw herself down by it and said, "Oh, Beast, Beast, why did you die? I was getting to love you so much."

No sooner had she said this than the hide of the beast split in two and out came the most handsome young prince who told her that he had been enchanted by a magician and that he could not recover his natural form unless a maiden should of her own accord, declare that she loved him.

Thereupon the prince sent for the merchant and his daughters, and he was married to Bella, and they all lived happy together ever afterwards.

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- Source: Joseph Jacobs, *Europa's Fairy Book* [also published under the title *European Folk and Fairy Tales*] (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916), no. 5, pp. 34-41. Reconstructed from various European sources.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Small-Tooth Dog

### England

Once upon a time there was a merchant who traveled about the world a great deal. On one of his journeys thieves attacked him, and they would have taken both his life and his money if a large dog had not come to his rescue and driven the thieves away.

When the dog had driven the thieves away he took the merchant to his house, which was a very handsome one, and dressed his wounds and nursed him till he was well.

As soon as he was able to travel the merchant began his journey home, but before starting he told the dog how grateful he was for his kindness, and asked him what reward he could offer in return, and he said he would not refuse to give the most precious thing he had.

And so the merchant said to the dog, "Will you accept a fish I have that can speak twelve languages?"

"No," said the dog, "I will not."

"Or a goose that lays golden eggs?"

"No," said the dog, "I will not."

"Or a mirror in which you can see what anybody is thinking about?"

"No," said the dog, "I will not."

"Then what will you have?" said the merchant.

"I will have none of such presents," said the dog; "but let me fetch your daughter, and bring her to my house."

When the merchant heard this he was grieved, but what he had promised had to be done, so he said to the dog, "You can come and fetch my daughter after I have been home for a week."

So at the end of the week, the dog came to the merchant's house to fetch his daughter, but when he got there he stayed outside the door, and would not go in.

But the merchant's daughter did as her father told her, and came out of the house dressed for a journey and ready to go with the dog.

When the dog saw her he looked pleased, and said, "Jump on my back, and I will take you away to my house."

So she mounted on the dog's back, and away they went at a great pace, until they reached the dog's house, which was many miles off.

But after she had been a month at the dog's house she began to mope and cry.

"What are you crying for?" said the dog.

"Because I want to go back to my father," she said.

The dog said, "If you will promise me that you will not stay there more than three days I will take you there. But first of all," said he, "what do you call me?"

"A great, foul, small-tooth dog," said she.

"Then," said he, "I will not let you go."

But she cried so pitifully that he promised again to take her home.

"But before we start," he said, "tell me what you call me."

"Oh," she said, "your name is Sweet-as-a-Honeycomb."

"Jump on my back," said he, "and I'll take you home."

So he trotted away with her on his back for forty miles, when they came to a stile.

"And what do you call me?" said he, before they got over the stile.

Thinking she was safe on her way, the girl said, "A great, foul, small-tooth dog."

But when she said this, he did not jump over the stile, but turned right round again at once, and galloped back to his own house with the girl on his back.

Another week went by, and again the girl wept so bitterly that the dog promised to take her to her father's house.

So the girl got on the dog's back again, and they reached the first stile, as before, and the dog stopped and said, "And what do you call me?"

"Sweet-as-a-Honeycomb," she replied.

So the dog leaped over the stile, and they went on for twenty miles until they came to another stile.

"And what do you call me?" said the dog with a wag of his tail.

She was thinking more of her father and her own house than of the dog, so she answered, "A great, foul, small-tooth dog."

Then the dog was in a great rage, and he turned right round about, and galloped back to his own house as before.

After she had cried for another week, the dog promised again to take her back to her father's house. So she mounted upon his back once more, and when they got to the first stile, the dog said, "And what do you call me?"

"Sweet-as-a-Honeycomb," she said.

So the dog jumped over the stile, and away they went -- for now the girl made up her mind to say the most loving things she could think of -- until they reached her father's house.

When they got to the door of the merchant's house, the dog said, "And what do you call me?"

Just at that moment the girl forgot the loving things she meant to say and began, "A great --," but the dog began to turn, and she got fast hold of the door latch, and was going to say "foul," when she saw how grieved the dog looked and remembered how good and patient he had been with her, so she said, "Sweeter-than-a-Honeycomb."

When she had said this she thought the dog would have been content and have galloped away, but instead of that he suddenly stood upon his hind legs, and with his forelegs he pulled off his dog's head and tossed it high in the air. His hairy coat dropped off, and there stood the handsomest young man in the world, with the finest and smallest teeth you ever saw.

Of course they were married, and lived together happily.

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- Source: Sidney Oldall Addy, *Household Tales and Other Traditional Remains: Collected in the Counties of York, Lincoln, Derby, and Nottingham* (London: David Nutt; Sheffield: Pawson and Brailsford, 1895), no. 1, pp. 1-4.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## Rose

### Irish-American

Once upon a time there was a widower with one daughter, and he married a widow with two daughters, each of whom was older than his own daughter Rose. The two elder daughters were all for balls and parties. Little Rose had to do all the work, and when they went to a party she was obliged to help them dress, brush, and comb their hair, and never was allowed to go herself. She never complained, but was very kind to her father, and always prepared his meals.

Once it was necessary for him to go on a long journey. He asked each of his daughters what he should bring them for a present. The elder daughters wanted silk dresses, jewelry, and all that was rare. Little Rose stood by, not saying a word.

Her father asked: "Little Rose, what can I bring for you?"

"Nothing, father, but a rose." And she kissed her father, and bade him good-by.

"Rose, I shall bring you a rose, the very prettiest I can get, if it should cost me my life."

After he got to his journey's end, he came to a splendid palace. The house was empty, but all in order. His breakfast was ready, but he could see no one. He stayed all night, in the morning went into the garden, and oh, the beautiful rose!

After he plucked the rose, and had gone a few steps, a great lion met him, frothing at the mouth, and told him, "For this rose you shall die."

The father said that he had a very beautiful daughter at home, whose name was Rose, and that, as he was leaving, he promised to bring her a rose; and he pleaded, "If you will only let me go home to my little daughter to bid her farewell."

So the lion let him go home, on condition that he was to return. And as he came home Rose was looking out of the window and saw her father coming, and ran to meet him.

"Why," said she, "father, what makes you look so sad?"

"Nothing, my child, except that I have plucked a rose, and for this rose I must die."

"No, father, you shall not go back and die for the rose, but I will go back and ask to have you pardoned."

So she went to the palace. As she entered it seemed to her that everything which her eyes fell on seemed to say, "Welcome, Beauty, here!" Even on her cup and saucer, and on every piece of furniture in her chamber were the words, "Welcome, Beauty, here!"

She went out to find the lion, and said that she had come to ask him to forgive her father, and that the rose was for her. But the lion said he would not do it unless she would promise to be his wife. Her father was very dear to her, yet she di not like to marry a lion.

The lion gave her a beautiful gold ring, and told her that whenever she wanted to see her father she was to lay the ring on her table before going to sleep, and wish to see her father, and she would be at home in the morning. Her father was now getting old, and she grieved for him. At night she laid her ring on the table, at the same time making a wish that she would like to see her father. The next morning she found herself with her father, whom she found much changed. His hair had turned white from grief at the thought of losing his Rose, or having her marry the lion.

That night she laid her ring on the table, and wished herself back at the palace. The palace was more beautiful than before, and the table all ready. On every plate were the words, "Welcome, Beauty, here!"

On the first morning she went out into the garden. The poor lion was lying very sick, and she looked at him. "Oh, I cannot bear to see my poor lion die; what am I to do?"

Finally, she said that she could not bear it any longer, and she called out, "I will be your wife."

With this a beautiful young prince stood before her. So they were married, and he sent for her father, and the stepsisters who had been so cruel to her were made servants to stand at the post of the gate before the palace, and all the people were happy.

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- Source: W. W. Newell, "English Folk-Tales in America *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, vol. 2, no. 6 (July - September, 1889), pp. 213-14.
- Newell's source: "Obtained in Cambridge, Mass., from the recitation of Mary Brown, who heard it in New Brunswick from a woman of Irish extraction, born in the province."
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Summer and Winter Garden

### Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

A merchant was planning to go to a fair, so he asked his three daughters what he should bring back for them.

The oldest one said, "A beautiful dress."

The second, "A pair of pretty shoes."

The third, "A rose."

To find a rose would be difficult, for it was the middle of winter, but because the youngest daughter was the most beautiful, and because she took great pleasure in flowers, the father said that he would do his best to find her one.

The merchant was now on his homeward trip. He had a splendid dress for the oldest daughter, a pair of beautiful shoes for the second one, but he had not been able to get a rose for the third one. Whenever he had entered a garden looking for roses, the people just laughed at him, asking him if he believed that roses grew in the snow. He was very sad about this, and as he was thinking about what he might bring his dearest child, he came to a castle. It had an adjoining garden where it was half summer and half winter. On the one side the most beautiful flowers were blossoming -- large and small. On the other side everything was bare and covered with deep snow.

The man climbed from his horse. He was overjoyed to see an entire hedge full of roses on the summer side. He approached it, picked one of them, and then rode off.

He had already ridden some distance when he heard something running and panting behind him. Turning around, he saw a large black beast, that called out, "Give me back my rose, or I'll kill you! Give me back my rose, or I'll kill you!"

The man said, "Please let me have the rose. I am supposed to bring one home for my daughter, the most beautiful daughter in the world."

"For all I care, but then give me your beautiful daughter for a wife!"

In order to get rid of the beast, the man said yes, thinking that he would not come to claim her.

However, the beast shouted back to him, "In eight days I will come and get my bride."

So the merchant brought each daughter what she had wanted, and each one was delighted, especially the youngest with her rose.

Eight days later the three sisters were sitting together at the table when something came stepping heavily up the stairs to the door. "Open up! Open up!" it shouted.

They opened the door, and were terrified when a large black beast stepped inside. "Because my bride did not come to me, and the time is up, I will fetch her myself." With that he went to the youngest daughter and grabbed hold of her. She began to scream, but it did not help. She had to go away with him. And when the father came home, his dearest child had been taken away.

The black beast carried the beautiful maiden to his castle where everything was beautiful and wonderful. Musicians were playing there, and below there was the garden, half summer and half winter, and the beast did everything to make he happy, fulfilling even her unspoken desires. They ate together, and she had to scoop up his food for him, for otherwise he would not have eaten. She was dear to the beast, and finally she grew very fond of him.

One day she said to him, "I am afraid, and don't know why. It seems to me that my father or one of my sisters is sick. Couldn't I see them just once?"

So the beast led her to a mirror and said, "Look inside."

She looked into the mirror, and it was as though she were at home. She saw her living room and her father. He really was sick, from a broken heart, because he held himself guilty that his dearest child had been taken away by a wild beast and surely had been eaten up. If he could know how well off she was, then he would not be so sad. She also saw her two sisters sitting on the bed and crying.

Her heart was heavy because of all this, and she asked the beast to allow her to go home for a few days. The beast refused for a long time, but she grieved so much that he finally had pity on her and said, "Go to your father, but promise me that you will be back here in eight days."

She promised, and as she was leaving, he called out again, "Do not stay longer than eight days."

When she arrived home her father was overjoyed to see her once again, but sickness and grief had already eaten away at his heart so much that he could not regain his health, and within a few days he died.

Because of her sadness, she could think of nothing else. Her father was buried, and she went to the funeral. The sisters cried together, and consoled one another, and when her thoughts finally turned to her dear beast, the eight days were long past.

She became frightened, and it seemed to her that he too was sick. She set forth immediately and returned to his castle. When she arrived there everything was still and sad inside. The musicians were not playing. Black cloth hung everywhere. The garden was entirely in winter and covered with snow. She looked for the beast, but he was not there. She looked everywhere, but could not find him.

Then she was doubly sad, and did not know how to console herself. She sadly went into the garden where she saw a pile of cabbage heads. They were old and rotten, and she pushed them aside. After turning over a few of them she saw her dear beast. He was lying beneath them and was dead.

She quickly fetched some water and poured it over him without stopping.

Then he jumped up and was instantly transformed into a handsome prince. They got married, and the musicians began to play again, and the summer side of the garden appeared in its splendor, and the black cloth was all ripped down, and together they lived happily ever after.

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- Source: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "Von dem Sommer- und Wintergarten," *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812), vol. 1, no. 68.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 1998.
- "The Summer and Winter Garden" was replaced in the Grimms' collection by "The Singing, Springing Lark," *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1814), vol. 2, no. 2. Since 1819 "The Singing, Springing Lark" has carried the KHM number 88.
- Link to the Grimm brothers' The Singing, Springing Lark.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Clinking Clanking Lowesleaf

### Germany

Once upon a time there was a king who had three daughters. The youngest was his pride and joy. One day he wanted to go to the fair to buy something, and he asked his three daughters what he should bring home for them. The first one asked for a golden spinning wheel. The second one a golden yarn reel, and the third one a clinking clanking lowesleaf. The king promised to bring these things and rode away. At the fair he bought the golden spinning wheel and the golden yarn reel, but no one had a clinking clanking lowesleaf for sale. He looked everywhere, but could not find one. This saddened him, because the youngest daughter was the joy of his life, and he wanted to please her ever so much.

As he sorrowfully made his way homeward, he came to a great, great forest and to a large birch tree. Under the birch tree there lay a large black poodle dog. Because the king looked so sad, the dog asked him what was the matter. "Oh," answered the king, "I was supposed to bring a clinking clanking lowesleaf to my youngest daughter, whom I love above anything else, but I cannot find one anywhere, and that is why I am so sad."

"I can help you," said the poodle. "The clinking clanking lowesleaf grows in this tree. If a year and a day from now you will give me that which first greets you upon your arrival home today, then you can have it."

At first the king did not want to agree, but he thought about it long and hard, then said to himself, "What could it be but our dog? Go ahead and make the promise." And he made the promise.

The poodle wagged his tail, climbed up into the birch, broke off the leaf with his frizzy-haired paw, and gave it to the king, saying, "You had better keep your word, or you will wish that you had!" The king repeated his promise, took the leaf, and rode on joyfully.

As he approached home, his youngest daughter jumped out with joy to greet him. The king was horrified. His heart was so filled with grief that he pushed her aside. She started to cry, thinking, "What does this mean, that father is pushing me away?" and she went inside and complained to her mother. Soon the king came in. He gave the oldest girl the golden spinning wheel, the middle one the golden yarn reel, and the youngest one the clinking clanking lowesleaf, and he was quiet and sad. Then the queen asked him was wrong with him, and why he had pushed the youngest daughter away; but he said nothing.

He grieved the entire year. He lamented and mourned and became thin and pale, so concerned was he. Whenever the queen asked him what was wrong, he only shook his head or walked away. Finally, when the year was nearly at its end, he could not longer keep still, and he told her about his misfortune, and thought that his wife would die of shock. She too was horrified, but she soon took hold of herself and said, "You men don't think of anything! After all, don't we have the goose herder's daughter? Let's dress her up and give her to the poodle. A stupid poodle will never know the difference."

The day arrived, and they dressed up the goose girl in their youngest daughter's clothes until she looked just perfect. They had scarcely finished when they heard a bark outside, and a scratching sound at the gate. They looked out, and sure enough, it was the large black poodle dog. They wondered who had taught him to count. After all, a year has more than three hundred days, and even a human can lose count, to say nothing of a dog! But he had not lost count. He had come to take away the princess.

The king and queen greeted him in a friendly manner, then led him outside to the goose girl. He wagged his tail and pawed at her, then he lay down on his belly and said,

> Sit upon my tail,
> And I'll take you away!

She sat down on him, and he took off across the heath. Soon they came to a great, great forest. When they came to the large birch tree, the poodle stopped to rest a while, for it was a hot day, and it was cool and shady here. Around and about there were many daisies [called *Gänseblümchen* -- goose flowers -- in German] poking up their white heads from the beautiful grass, and the girl thought about her parents, and sighed, "Oh, if only my father were here. He could graze the geese so nicely here in this beautiful, lush meadow."

The poodle stood up, shook himself, and said, "Just what kind of a girl are you?"

"I am a goose girl, and my father tends geese," she answered. She would have liked to say what the queen had told her to say, but it was impossible for anyone to tell a lie under this tree. She could not, and she could not.

He jumped up abruptly, looked at her threateningly, and said, "You are not the right one. I have no use for you:"

> Sit upon my tail,
> And I'll take you away!

They were not far from the king's house, when the queen saw them and realized which way the wind was blowing. Therefore she took the broom binder's daughter, dressed her up in even more beautiful clothes. When the poodle arrived and made nasty threats, she brought the broom girl out to him, saying, "This is the right girl!"

"We shall see," responded the poodle dog. The queen became very uneasy, and the king's throat tightened, but the poodle wagged his tail and scratched, then lay down on his belly, saying,

> Sit upon my tail,
> And I'll take you away!

The broom girl sat down on him, and he took off across the heath. Soon they too came to the great forest and to the large birch tree. As they sat there resting, the girl thought about her parents, and sighed, "Oh, if only my father were here. He could make brooms so easily, for here there are masses of thin twigs!"

The poodle stood up, shook himself, and said, "Just what kind of a girl are you?"

She wanted to lie, for the queen had ordered her to, and she was a very strict mistress, but she could not, because she was under this tree, and she answered, "I am a broom girl, and my father makes brooms."

He jumped up as though he were mad, looked at her threateningly, and said, "You are not the right one. I have no use for you:"

> Sit upon my tail,
> And I'll take you away!

They approached the king's house, and the king and queen, who had been steadily looking out the window, began to moan and cry, especially the king, for the youngest daughter was the apple of his eye. The court officials cried and sobbed as well, and there was nothing but mourning everywhere. But it was to no avail. The poodle arrived and said, "This time give me the right girl, or you will wish that you had!" He spoke with such a frightful voice and made such angry gestures, that everyone's heart stood still, and their skin shuddered. Then they led out the youngest daughter, dressed in white, and as pale as snow. It was as though the moon had just come out from behind dark clouds. The poodle knew that she was the right one, and said with a caressing voice,

> Sit upon my tail,
> And I'll take you away!

He ran much more gently this time, and did not stop in the great forest under the birch tree, but hurried deeper and deeper into the woods until they finally reached a small house, where he quietly lay the princess, who had fallen asleep, onto a soft bed. She slumbered on and dreamed about her parents, and about the strange ride, and she laughed and cried in her sleep. The poodle lay down in his hut and kept watch over the little house and the princess.

When she awoke the next morning and found herself so all alone, she cried and grieved and wanted to run away, but she could not, because the house was enchanted. It let people enter, but no one could leave. There was plenty to eat and drink, everything that even a princess could desire, but she did not want anything and did not take a single bite. She could neither see nor hear the poodle, but the birds sang wonderfully. There were deer grazing around and about, and they looked at the princess with their large eyes. The morning wind curled her golden locks and poured fresh color over her face. The princess sighed and said, "Oh, if only someone were here, even if it were the most miserable, dirty beggar woman. I would kiss her hand and hug her and love her and honor her!"

"Is that true?" screeched a harsh voice close behind her, startling the princess. She looked around, and there stood a bleary-eyed woman as old as the hills. She glared at the princess and said, "You called for a beggar woman, and a beggar woman is here! In the future do not despise beggar women. Now listen well! The poodle dog is an enchanted prince, this hut an enchanted city, and all the animals enchanted people. If you are a genuine princess and are also kind to poor people, then you can redeem them all and become rich and happy. The poodle goes away every morning, because he has to, and every evening he returns home, because he wants to. At midnight he pulls off his rough hide and becomes an ordinary man. If he knocks on your bedroom door, do not let him in, however much he asks and begs, not the first night, not the second night, and especially not the third night. During the third night, after he has tired himself out talking and has fallen asleep, take the hide, make a large fire, and burn it. But first lock your bedroom door securely, so that he cannot get in, and do not open it when he scratches on the door, if you cherish your life. And on your wedding day say three times, don't forget it now, say three times:

> Old tongues,
> Old lungs!

and I will see you again." The princess took very careful notice of everything, and the old woman disappeared.

The first night the prince asked and begged her to open her door, but she answered, "No, I'll not do it," and she did not do it. The second night he asked her even more sweetly, but she did not answer at all. She buried her head in her pillow and she did not open the door. The third night he asked her so touchingly and sang such beautiful melodies to her, that she wanted to jump up and open the door for him, but fortunately she remembered the old woman and her mother and father. She pulled the bedcovers over her head, and did not open the door. Complaining, the prince walked away, but she did not hear him leave. While he slept she built up the fire, crept out on tiptoe, picked up the rough hide from the corner where the poodle always put it, barred the bedroom door, and threw it into the flames. The poodle jumped up howling, gnawed and clawed at the door, threatened, begged, growled, and howled again. But she did not open the door, and he could not open the door, however fiercely he threw himself against it.

The fire flamed up brightly one last time, and there was an enormous bang, as if heaven and hell had exploded. Standing before her was the most handsome prince in the world. The hut was now a magnificent castle, the forest a great city full of palaces, and the animals were all kinds of people.

At their wedding ceremony, the prince and the princess were seated at the table with the old king and the old queen and the two sisters and many rich and important people, when the bride called out three times,

> Old tongues,
> Old lungs!

and the tattered old woman came in. The old queen scolded, and the two princesses scolded, and they wanted to chase her away, but the young queen stood up and let the old woman sit down at her place, eat from her plate, and drink from her goblet. When the old woman had eaten and drunk her fill, she looked at the old queen and the evil daughters, and they became crooked and lame. But she blessed the young queen, and she became seven times more beautiful, and no one ever saw or heard from the old woman again.

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- Source: Carl and Theodor Colshorn, "Vom klinkesklanken Lowesblatt," *Märchen und Sagen aus Hannover* (Hannover: Verlag von Carl Ruempler, 1854), no. 20, pp. 64-69.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 1998.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Little Nut Twig

### Germany

Once upon a time there was a rich merchant whose business required him to travel abroad. Taking leave, he said to his three daughters, "Dear daughters, I would like to have something nice for you when I return. What should I bring home for you?"

The oldest one said, "Father dear, a beautiful pearl necklace for me!"

The second one said, "I would like a finger ring with a diamond stone."

The youngest one cuddled up to her father and whispered, "Daddy, a pretty green nut twig for me."

"Good, my dear daughters," said the merchant, "I will remember. Farewell."

The merchant traveled far and purchased many goods, but he also faithfully remembered his daughters' wishes. To please his eldest he had packed a costly pearl necklace into his baggage, and he had also purchased an equally valuable diamond ring for the middle daughter. But, however much he tried, he could not find a green nut twig. For this reason he went on foot a good distance on his homeward journey. His way led him in large part through the woods, and he hoped thus finally to find a nut twig. However, he did not succeed, and the good father became very depressed that he had not been able to fulfill the harmless request of his youngest and dearest child.

Finally, as he was sadly making his way down a path that led through a dark forest and next to a dense thicket, his hat rubbed against a twig, and it made a sound like hailstones falling on it. Looking up he saw that it was a pretty green nut twig, from which was hanging a cluster of golden nuts. The man was delighted. He reached his hand up and plucked the magnificent twig. But in that same instant, a wild bear shot out from the thicket and stood up on his back paws, growling fiercely, as though he were about to tear the merchant to pieces.

With a terrible voice he bellowed, "Why did you pick my nut twig, you? Why? I will eat you up!"

Shaking and trembling with fear the merchant said, "Dear bear, don't eat me. Let me go on my way with the little nut twig. I'll give you a large ham and many sausages for it!"

But the bear bellowed again, "Keep your ham and your sausages! I will not eat you, only if you will promise to give me the first thing that meets you upon your arrival home."

The merchant gladly agreed to this, for he recalled how his poodle usually ran out to greet him, and he would gladly sacrifice the poodle in order to save his own life.

Following a crude handshake the bear lumbered back into the thicket. The merchant, breathing a sigh of relief, went hurriedly and happily on his way.

The golden nut twig decorated the merchant's had splendidly as he hurried homeward. Filled with joy, the youngest girl ran to greet her dear father. The poodle followed her with bold leaps. The oldest daughters and the mother were not quite so fast to step out the door and greet home-comer.

The merchant was horrified to see that the first one to greet him was his youngest daughter. Concerned and saddened, he withdrew from the happy child's embrace, and -- following the initial greetings -- told them all that had happened with the nut twig.

They all cried and were very sad, but the youngest daughter showed the most courage, and she resolved to fulfill her father's promise.

The mother soon thought up a good plan. She said, "Dear ones, let's not be afraid. If the bear should come to hold you to your promise, dear husband, instead of giving him our youngest daughter, let's give him the herdsman's daughter. He will be satisfied with her."

This proposal was accepted. The daughters were happy once again, and they were very pleased with their beautiful presents. The youngest one always kept her nut twig with her, and she soon forgot the bear and her father's promise.

But one day a dark carriage rattled through the street and up to the front of the merchant's house. The ugly bear climbed out and walked into the house growling. He went up to the startled man and asked that his promise be fulfilled. Quickly and secretly they fetched the herdsman's daughter, who was very ugly, dressed her in good clothes, and put her in the bear's carriage.

The journey began. Once outside the town, the bear laid his wild shaggy head in the shepherd girl's lap and growled,

> Tussle me, scuffle me
> Soft and gentle, behind my ears,
> Or I will eat you, skin and bone

The girl began to do so, but she did not do it the way the bear wanted her to, and he realized that he had been deceived. He was about to eat the disguised shepherd girl, but in her fright she quickly fled from the carriage.

Then the bear rode back to the merchant's house, and with terrible threats, demanded the right bride. So the dear maiden had to come forward, and -- following a bitterly sorrowful farewell -- she rode away with the ugly bridegroom.

Once outside the town, he laid his coarse head in the girl's lap and growled again,

> Tussle me, scuffle me
> Soft and gentle, behind my ears,
> Or I will eat you, skin and bone

And the girl did just that, and she did it so softly that it pacified him, and his terrible bearish expression became friendly. Gradually the bear's poor bride began to gain some trust toward him. The journey did not last long, for the carriage traveled extremely fast, like a windstorm through the air. They soon came to a very dark forest, and the carriage suddenly stopped in front of a dark and yawning cave. This was where the bear lived. Oh, how the girl trembled!

The bear embraced her with his claw-arms and said to her with a friendly growl, "This is where you will live, my little bride; and you will be happy, as long as you behave yourself here, otherwise my wild animals will tear you apart."

As soon as they had gone a few steps inside the dark cave, he unlocked an iron door and stepped with his bride into a room that was filled with poisonous worms. They hissed at them rapaciously. The bear growled into his little bride's ear,

> Do not look around!
> Neither right nor left,
> Straight ahead, and you'll be safe!

Then the girl did indeed walk through the room without looking around, and all the while not a single worm stirred or moved. And in this manner they went through ten more rooms, and the last one was filled with the most terrible creatures: dragons and snakes, toads swollen with poison, basilisks and lindorms. And in each room the bear growled,

> Do not look around!
> Neither right nor left,
> Straight ahead, and you'll be safe!

The girl trembled and quaked with fear, like the leaves of an aspen, but she remained steadfast and did not look around, neither right nor left. When the door to the twelfth room opened up, a glistening stream of light shone toward the two of them. The most beautiful music sounded from within, and everywhere there were cries of joy.

Before the bride could comprehend this -- she was still trembling from seeing such horrible things, and now this surprising loveliness -- there was a terrible clap of thunder, and she thought that earth and heaven were breaking apart.

It was soon quiet once again. The forest, the cave, the poisonous animals, and the bear had all disappeared. In their place stood a splendid castle with rooms decorated in gold and with beautifully dressed servants. And the bear had been transformed into a handsome young man. He was the prince of this magnificent castle, and he pressed his little bride to his heart, thanking her a thousand times that she had redeemed him and his servants -- the wild animals -- from their enchantment.

She was now a high and wealthy princess, but she always wore the beautiful nut twig on her breast. It never wilted, and she especially liked to wear it, because it had been the key to her good fortune.

Her parents and sisters were soon informed of this happy turn of events. The bear prince had them brought to the castle, where they lived in splendid happiness forever after.

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- Source: Ludwig Bechstein, "Das Nusszweiglein," *Deutsches Märchenbuch*, 5th edition (Leipzig: Verlag von Georg Wigand, 1847), pp. 81-85.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 1998.
- Ludwig Bechstein (1801-1860) was Germany's most widely read collector and editor of folktales during the nineteenth century, his popularity within Germany at that time surpassing that of his more scholarly contemporaries, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## Little Broomstick

### Germany

There was once a merchant who had three daughters. The two older ones were proud and haughty. The younger one, however, was well behaved and modest, although her beauty greatly surpassed that of her sisters. She dressed simply, and thus unconsciously enhanced her beauty more than her sisters were able to do with the most expensive clothing and jewelry.

Nettchen, that was the name of the merchant's youngest daughter, had a dear girlfriend who was very poor, but equally beautiful and virtuous. She was a broom binder's daughter, and was for this reason was called Little Broomstick by young and old alike. Both girls were of one heart and one soul. They entrusted one another with their little secrets, and between them all class distinctions fell by the wayside. This angered the older sisters greatly, but Nettchen let them scold, and loved her Little Broomstick nonetheless.

Once the merchant was planning a long journey, although the season was already very advanced. He asked his daughters if they had a wish as to what he should bring home to them.

The oldest one said, "Bring me a golden necklace!"

The second, "Bring me a pair of carrings that are so beautiful that all women be envious of me because of them!"

The youngest said that she had no wish, because her father, in his goodness, had already given her everything. But the merchant insisted, so she answered with a smile, "Then bring me three roses growing on one stem."

She was convinced that her father would not be able to find such a present in the middle of winter. He kissed her for her modesty and set forth on his journey.

He was on his way home when he remembered the presents that he was supposed to get for his daughters. He soon found a golden necklace and a pair of splendid earrings, but not so the three roses for Nettchen. The father had just decided to buy some other valuable present for his darling, when suddenly -- to his surprise -- he came upon a green area. He stepped through a wide gateway and found himself in a large, blossoming garden adjacent to a splendid castle. Outside everything was covered with snow, but in the garden the trees were in blossom, nightingales were singing in the bushes, and finally he even saw a blossoming rosebush, and on one of its branches were three of the most beautiful half-open buds. Elated, he thought that now he would be able to fulfill Nettchen's wish, and he broke off the branch.

He had scarcely done so when an enormous beast with a long ugly snout, ears hanging down, and a shaggy coat and tail appeared before him and laid his long sharp claws on his shoulder. The merchant was deathly frightened, and even worse when the beast began to speak, threatening him with death for his misdeed.

The merchant begged, telling him why he wanted the roses, whereupon the beast answered, "Your youngest daughter must be a true pearl of her sex. Very well, if you will promise to give her to me as a wife in seven months, then you shall live and return to your people."

As terrified as the merchant was at this proposal, his fear nevertheless led him to make the promise, thinking that he would be able to trick the monster.

The merchant returned to his people and distributed the presents. However, he was sad and melancholy, and they noticed that he was carrying a great burden in his heart. Nettchen asked him to tell her what was troubling him, but he only gave her excuses. He told the secret only to the two older daughters, who wickedly took pleasure in the situation.

So that the father could keep his eyes on her, Nettchen was almost never allowed to leave the house. Only Little Broomstick came to visit her from time to time.

One day -- the seventh month had just passed -- she and Little Broomstick were again together when a carriage stopped before the house. A servant, gesturing silently, handed a note to the merchant. On it were written the words, "Fulfill your promise!"

The merchant was terrified, but he collected himself and asked Little Broomstick to come to him. The girl came, expecting nothing bad. The merchant pointed at her. She was lifted into the carriage, and away they went in a thundering gallop.

However, the beast recognized the deception as soon as Little Broomstick was brought before him, and he ordered the girl to go home immediately and bring back the right one. The carriage stopped again before the merchant's house, and when Little Broomstick stepped out, Nettchen fell around her neck with friendly greetings. But then she was picked up and shoved into the carriage, which drove away with its booty as fast as an arrow.

Nettchen was very frightened, but she soon collected herself. Inside the strange, beautiful castle she was received with honor, although with silent gestures, and she no longer felt concerned. Silent servants brought her the most delicious things to eat and showed her to a bedroom, where a blinding white canopy bed invited her to rest. After saying her prayers, she surrendered to the arms of sleep.

When she awoke she saw to her fright that a disgusting shaggy monster lay next to her. But it was lying there still and quiet, so she left it alone. Then it left, and she had time to think about her adventure.

The ugly beast gradually became her sleeping companion, and she grew less and less afraid of him. He cuddled up to her, and she stroked his shaggy coat and even allowed him to touch her lips with his long, cold snout. This had gone on for four weeks when one night the beast did not come to her. Nettchen could not sleep for worry and concern about what might have happened to the beast, whom she had become quite fond of.

The next morning she was walking in the garden when she saw the beast lying all stretched out on the bank of a pond that served as a bath. He did not move a limb and showed every sign of being dead. A bitter pain penetrated her breast, and she cried over the death of the poor beast. But her tears had scarcely started to flow when the monster was transformed into a handsome youth.

He stood up before her, pressed her hand to his breast, and said, "You have redeemed me from a terrible curse. My father wanted me to marry a woman whom I did not love. I refused steadfastly, and in his anger, my father had a sorceress transform me into a monster. The transformation was to last until an innocent virgin would fall in love with me in spite of my ugly form, and would cry tears on my behalf. You with your heart of an angel have done just that, and I cannot thank you enough. If you will become my wife, I will repay with love what you have done for me."

Nettchen extended him her hand, and they were married. Then the deathly quiet castle awoke in a hustle and bustle. Joy ruled everywhere, and the newlyweds lived in bliss.

Now the young wife had been given the requirement that she not return to her father's house for one year. However, she obtained a mirror in which she could see everything that was happening in her family circle. Nettchen looked into the mirror often, and she saw her father in his sorrow, although her sisters were cheerful and gay. She observed Little Broomstick as well, and how she mourned for her lost girlfriend. She did not look into the mirror for some time, and when she returned to it, she saw her father on his deathbed and her sisters in the next room making merry with their friends.

This saddened the good sister, and she confided her sorrow with her husband. He comforted her, saying, "Your father will not die. In my garden there is a plant whose sap can call back the fleeing life-spirits. The year is nearly over. Then we will fetch your father, and you will not have to be separated from him any longer."

Nettchen was pleased with this, and as soon as the year had passed, the husband and wife and their magnificent entourage journeyed to Nettchen's home city. The two older sisters nearly burst with envy and anger, while the father's joy brought back his health, so that all turned to good. The sap restored his full strength and wellbeing. Little Broomstick too was overjoyed, and Nettchen was her old girlfriend once again. She and the merchant accompanied them back to the prince's castle.

Nettchen had a forgiving heart, and however much she had been hurt by her sisters, she wanted to share her good fortune with them. Therefore she invited them to visit her, and showed them all her wealth. However, the splendor angered the sisters, and they resolved to kill their happy sister. Once when they were in the bath, they forced Nettchen under the water, and she drowned.

They had scarcely done this when a tall female figure rose up before them and glared at them with angry eyes. She touched the dead woman with a wand, and she came back to life. "I am the sorceress who once transformed the prince," said the tall figure. I have noted your good heart and taken you under my protection. These miserable ones killed you. Now I leave their fate in your hands!"

Nettchen begged for mercy for them, but the sorceress shook her head and said, "They must die, for you will never be safe from their malice, and as soon as they have been punished, my power will cease."

"Then do with them what you will!" sobbed Nettchen.

"Let them be transformed into columns and remain such until a man falls in love with them, and that will never happen."

She touched the sisters with her hand, and they were immediately transformed into two stone columns, which to this day are still standing in the garden of the splendid castle, for it has not yet occurred to any man that he should fall in love with cold, heartless stones.

The good Little Broomstick remained Nettchen's most faithful girlfriend. She still shares her good fortune with her, if in the meantime the two of them have not died.

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- Source: Ludwig Bechstein, "Besenstielchen," *Deutsches Märchenbuch*, 5th edition (Leipzig: Verlag von Georg Wigand, 1847), pp. 228-32.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 1998.
- Ludwig Bechstein (1801-1860) was Germany's most widely read collector and editor of folktales during the nineteenth century, his popularity within Germany at that time surpassing that of his more scholarly contemporaries, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## Beauty and the Horse

### Denmark

There was once a merchant whose business was so immense that he was the wealthiest tradesman known. He had three daughters, one of whom was named Beauty. One day the merchant received word from friends far away, informing him of the failure of one of his connections, and he at once prepared himself for a journey to that place. The two older daughters asked him to buy all sorts of finery and dresses for them, but Beauty asked for nothing at all. When the merchant left, these two girls had rubbed their eyes with onions in order to look as if they were sorry to bid him good-bye; but Beauty needed no such artifice; her tears were quite natural.

So the merchant went away, and in due time arrived at the place where the tradesman of whom he had heard the bad news was living. But instead of obtaining money, as he hoped, he was kicked and beaten so violently that it seems a great wonder he came away without losing his life. Of course he had now nothing to do but return, so he mounted his horse and turned homeward. Towards evening he unfortunately lost his way, and when it became quite dark he knew no better than to ride in the direction of a light which was shining from a distance. At length he reached a beautiful little palace, and he put up at it as if it were an inn, or one at home.

After a while he found a shelter and food for his horse -- pure oats, and nothing else. The animal might well dance for joy, for both man and beast were well-nigh exhausted from the long ride. When the horse had been provided for, the master stepped into the palace. There a light was burning, and a table was laid for one person, but no one was to be seen. As the merchant was tired, he sat down without invitation, and ate a hearty supper. A fine bed was there, too, and when he had eaten enough he stretched himself among the pillows and enjoyed a good night's rest.

The next morning everything appeared as on the evening before. The horse was well supplied, and as breakfast was ready on the table, the merchant seated himself, doing justice to the good meal. At he was now ready to leave, he thought it might be well to look over the premises, and glancing into the garden he perceived some exquisite flowers. He went down, intending to carry some of them home with him as a present for Beauty; but no sooner had he touched them than a horse came running towards him as fast as it could trot, saying, "Thou thoughtless man; I was good to you last night, I gave you shelter and provisions, and now you would even take with you the most beautiful flowers in my garden."

The merchant immediately begged pardon, saying that he had intended the flowers as a gift for Beauty, his daughter.

"Have you several daughters?" asked the horse.

"Yes, I have three, and Beauty is the youngest one," he replied.

"Now you must promise me," said the horse, "that you will give me the daughter whose name is Beauty; if you refuse, I will take your life."

Well, the merchant did not wish to lose his life, so he promised to bring his daughter to the palace, whereupon the horse disappeared among the trees, and the man rode home.

As soon as he reached his house, the two older daughters came out and asked him for the fine things which they were expecting. But Beauty came and bid him welcome. He produced the flowers and gave them to her, saying, "These are fo you, but they cost your life," and then he told her how he had been obliged to make the fatal promise to the horse, in order to save his life.

Beauty at once said, "I am willing to follow you, father, and am always glad to help you." They started on their journey, and soon arrived at the palace.

As before, no one was to be seen, but the merchant found food for his horses and a good stable The table was also laid for two persons, and there were two beds. Having done justice to the supper, father and daughter retired and slept soundly. When they awoke the next morning, they found breakfast ready for both, ate heartily, and having exchanged many loving and tender words, they separated, the father riding away. We will let him proceed, and see what occurred at the palace.

Shortly before dinnertime the horse arrived. He came into the room and said, "Welcome, Beauty!" She did not feel very glad, and had all she could do in keeping her tears back. "You shall do nothing but walk around in these rooms and in the garden," continued the horse. "Your meals are provided for. I shall come home every day at noon; at other times you must not expect me."

Time passed, and Beauty felt so lonely that she often longed for noon, when the horse came home, and she could talk with him. She gradually came to look at him more and more kindly; but one thing caused her great distress, namely, that she had no news from her father. One day she mentioned this to the horse.

"Yes," said he, "I understand that very well. In the large room you will find a mirror in which you can see all that you are thinking of."

She was happy to learn this, and went straight into the room where the mirror was hanging. As soon as she thought of her father, her old home was visible in the glass, and she noticed how he was sitting in his chair with a sorrowful expression upon his countenance, while his two daughters were singing and dancing. Beauty felt sorry over this state of affairs, and the next day she told the horse what she had seen.

"Your father is sorry, I suppose," said the horse, " because he has lost you. He will soon feel better, however."

But on the next day, when Beauty consulted the mirror, her father looked pale and ill, like one who is deadly sick; both of her sisters were dressed for a ball, and neither of them seemed to care for the weak man. Beauty burst into tears, and when the horse came home, asking what ailed her, she told him of the bad state of affairs, wishing that he would allow her to return and nurse her poor father during his illness.

"If you will promise to come back," said the horse, "you may return and stay for three days; but under no condition must you break your word."

Beauty told him she would come back in three days.

"Tonight," resumed the horse, "before going to bed, you must place the mirror under your pillow, saying, 'I wish to be home tomorrow.' Then your wish will be fulfilled. When you desire to return, you must do likewise."

The next morning, when Beauty awoke, she was at her old home. Her father became so glad to see her again that he at once felt a great deal better. She cared so well for him that the next day he was able to be up, and on the third day he was almost well. As he wished her to stay with him a few days longer, she complied, thinking that no harm would come from it. On the third day after, however, when she looked into the mirror, she saw the horse stretched on the ground in front of the bench which was his favorite seat in the garden. She now felt that it would be impossible for her to remain longer, hence in the evening, before going to bed, she placed the mirror under her pillow, saying: "I wish to be at the palace tomorrow morning."

She promptly awoke in the palace the following morning, and hurrying into the garden she found the horse so very sick that he could not stand on his legs. Beauty knelt down and asked him to forgive her for staying away longer than she had promised. The horse asked her if she could not persuade herself to stay with him all her life, but she answered that it would seem very singular to live with a horse all her lifetime. The poor animal now sighed so deeply that she took pity on him and said, fearing that he might die then and there, that she would always stay with him and never leave him.

As soon as she had made this promise, the horse vanished, and a beautiful young prince stood before her. He seized her hand and asked whether she was not sorry for the promise she had made. No, she said, she would rather stay with him now than when he was in the shape of a horse. He now told her that both he and the whole land had been enchanted by his wicked stepmother, who had converted him into a horse, and told him that only when a beautiful young girl would promise to stay with him, in his altered shape, would the enchantment be over. He wanted to marry Beauty, and live in the palace which belonged to him.

So they sent for her father to take up his residence with them, and now the marriage was performed and celebrated in a splendid manner. They lived long and happily together, the prince and his Beauty.

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- Source: J. Christian Bay, *Danish Fairy and Folk Tales* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1899), pp. 14-20.
- Bay's sources for this collection: Svend Grundtvig, E. T. Kristensen, Ingvor Bondesen, and L. Budde.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Singing Rose

### Austria

A king had three daughters. They were more beautiful than the young women of today, and each had passed her sixteenth year of life. The king thought about making one of his daughters queen, but he did not know which one he should select over the other two.

One day he summoned all three and said to them, "My dear children, I am now old and frail, and every day is a gift. Before I die, I would like to bring everything in my realm into order and name one of you as the heir to my kingdom. Now go out into the wide world, and the one of you who brings back a singing rose shall inherit my throne, and she shall be queen over the entire land."

When the three daughters had heard this, they tearfully took leave of their old father, then -- trusting their luck -- set forth for foreign lands, each taking a different path.

It happened that the youngest and most beautiful of them had to go through a dark pine forest. All kinds of birds were singing at the same time. It was wonderful to listen to them. It began to get dark, the birds flew to their nests, and after a while it became quiet as a mouse. Then suddenly a bright, beautiful, loud tone sounded forth, such as the princess had never heard before, neither from birds nor from humans, and she immediately thought, "That can only be the singing rose."

She hurried on in the direction that the marvelous sounds seemed to be coming from. She had not walked long before she saw a large, old-fashioned castle on a cliff. She eagerly climbed up to the castle and pulled several times on the latch. Finally the gate opened with a creaking sound, and an old man with a long, ice-gray beard looked out.

"What is your wish?" he grumpily asked the startled maiden.

"I would like a singing rose," she answered. "Do you have such a thing in your garden?"

"Yes indeed," answered the old man.

"What will you take for it, if I could get it from you?"

"You need give me nothing for the singing rose. You can have it today, but as payment, I will come to you in seven years and bring you back with me to this, my castle."

"Just bring me quickly the valuable flower," shouted the maiden joyfully, for she was thinking only about the singing rose and the kingdom, but not about what would happen after seven years.

The old man went back into the castle, and returned soon with a full, glowing rose. It was singing so beautifully that the maiden's heart jumped for joy. She eagerly reached out her hand for it, and as soon as she had the flower in her hands she ran down the mountain like a deer.

The old man called after her with a serious voice, "I will see you in seven years!"

The maiden wandered the entire night through the dark woods with her rose. Her pleasure in the singing flower and the inherited kingdom caused her to forget all fear. The rose sang without pause the entire way; and the louder and more beautifully it sang, the faster the princess hurried on toward her homeland.

She arrived home and told her father everything that had happened to her, and the rose sang beautifully. Immeasurable joy ruled in the castle, and the king gave one celebration after the other. Soon the two older sisters returned. They had found nothing, and had had to return home empty handed. And now the youngest daughter, who had brought back the rose, became queen, although the old father continued to rule. The royal family lived beautiful, joyful days. Day after day and year after year slipped by.

Finally the seventh year came to an end, and on the first day of the eighth year the old man from the castle appeared before the king and demanded from him the one of his daughter who had brought home the singing rose. The king presented to him his oldest daughter, but the old man rejected her, shaking his head and growling, "She is not the right one."

When the king saw that he could not get away with deception, he -- with a bleeding heart -- turned over the youngest and dearest of his children.

The princess now had to go with the grumbling graybeard to his castle, from which she had once obtained the singing rose. The beautiful maiden was very sad, for she had no one there except for her old master. Day after day she sorrowfully thought about her father and her sisters.

In the castle there were other pleasures in abundance, but they did not comfort her, for she did not have the company of her loved ones. Her thoughts were always in her homeland. Further, all the doors and chests in the castle were locked, and the old man did not let her have access to a single key.

One day she learned -- God knows from where! -- that her oldest sister was to marry a neighboring prince, and that the wedding would take place in a few days. Disquieted, she went to the old man and asked him for permission to attend her sister's wedding.

"Just go!" growled the old man. "But I am telling you in advance, do not laugh once during the entire wedding day. If you disobey my order, I will tear you into a thousand pieces. I myself will continually be by your side, and if you as much as open your mouth to laugh, it will be over with you. Take notice!"

The princess thought that this would be easy to follow, and on the announced day she appeared with the old graybeard at her sister's wedding. Joy ruled in the king's castle when they saw the long missing queen returning. She was very happy and took advantage of the day, but she did not forget the old man's order, and she did not once open her mouth to laugh. That evening she had to take leave from her loved ones, and she sadly returned to the lonely castle with her companion. Her time of monotony began once again, and the poor princess was always glad when a day finally ended.

Then the rumor came to her ears that the other sister would marry soon. This disquieted her again, and she asked the old man if she could not attend her second sister's wedding.

"Just go!" growled the old man." But this time you are not allowed to speak a single word the entire day. I will go with you again and observe you vigilantly.

The princess thought that this would be easy to follow, and on the announced day she appeared with the old graybeard at her sister's wedding. Joy ruled in the king's castle when they saw the long missing queen returning. Everyone ran out to meet her. They greeted her and welcomed her and asked her about everything. But she pretended that she could not talk, and did not allow a single sound to escape from her beautiful lips. But this time she did not keep up her courage as well as she had the last time, and that evening when everyone was talking together until it was humming like a beehive, a little word slipped out. The old man quickly jumped up, took her by the hand, and led her out of the hall and back to his lonely castle.

Here the princess had other things in great abundance, but she greatly missed the company of her loved ones, and everything seemed terribly monotonous to her.

One day when she was sadly walking through the garden where the rose had previously blossomed and sung, the old man came to her and said with a serious expression, "Your majesty, if tomorrow while it is striking twelve you will cut off my head in three blows, then everything that you find in the castle will be yours, and you will be free forever!"

The princess took heart from the old man's speech and decided to attempt the risky deed.

The next day -- it was Saturday -- the old man appeared a little before twelve o'clock and uncovered his neck. She drew the sword that she had hung about her waist, and as the castle clock struck one she swung the sword once, then quickly again two more times. The old man's head rolled away on the floor. But behold! Instead of blood, a key fell from the head. It opened all the chests and doors in the entire castle. There the princess found many, many precious things, and she was rich and free forever.

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- Source: Source: Ignaz and Joseph Zingerle, "Die singende Rose," *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner'schen Buchhandlung, 1852), no. 30, pp. 183-88.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 1998.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Bear Prince

### Switzerland

A merchant once wanted to go to market. He asked his three daughters what he should bring home for them.

The oldest one said, "I would like pearls and precious stones."

"You can buy a sky-blue dress for me," said the middle one.

But the youngest one said, "Nothing in the world would be dearer to me than a grape."

Once at the market, the merchant saw as many pearls and precious stones as he could possibly want. And he soon purchased a sky-blue dress as well. But as for a grape, he could not find one anywhere at the market. This saddened him greatly, because he loved his youngest daughter most of all.

Buried thus in his thoughts, he was making his way toward home when a little dwarf stepped before him. He asked, "Why are you so sad?"

"Oh," answered the merchant, "I was supposed to bring home a grape for my youngest daughter, but I was not able to find one anywhere at the market."

The dwarf said, "Just take a few steps into that meadow down there, and you will come to a large vineyard. A white bear will be there. He will growl fiercely when you approach, but don't let that frighten you. You'll get a grape after all."

So the merchant went down into the meadow, and it happened just as the dwarf had said. A white bear was keeping guard at the vineyard, and he growled at the merchant when he was still a long way off.

"What do you want here?"

"Be so good," said the merchant, "and let me take a grape for my youngest daughter, just a single one."

"You cannot have one," said the bear, "unless you promise to give me that which will first greet you upon your arrival home."

The merchant did not think long about this before accepting the bear's terms. Then he was permitted to take a grape, and he happily made his way toward home.

Upon his arrival home, the youngest daughter ran out to meet him, for she -- more than anyone else -- had missed him, and she could hardly wait to see him. Seeing the grape in his hand, she threw her arms around his neck and could scarcely contain herself for joy.

But the father was overcome with sorrow, and he could not tell anyone why. Every day he expected the white bear to come and demand from him his dearest child.

When exactly one year had passed since he taken the grape from the vineyard, the bear did indeed trot up, confronted the merchant, and said, "Now give me that which first greeted you upon your arrival home, or I'll eat you."

The merchant had not lost all of his senses, and he said, "Take my dog. He jumped right out the door when he saw me coming."

But the bear began to growl loudly and said, "He is not the right one. If you don't keep your promise, I'll eat you."

Then the merchant said, "So just take the apple tree in front of the house. That was the first thing that I met."

But the bear growled even stronger and said, "That is not the right one. If you don't keep your promise immediately, I'll eat you."

Nothing more would help. The merchant had to surrender his youngest daughter. When she came out, a coach drove up. The bear led her inside, sat down next to her, and away they went.

After a while the coach stopped in the courtyard of a castle, and the bear led the daughter into the castle and welcomed her. This was his home, he said, and from now on she would be his wife. He gave her everything that her heart could desire, so that with time it no longer occurred to her that her husband was a bear. There were just two things that seemed strange to her: Why did the bear insist on having no lights at nighttime, and why did he always feel so cold?

After she had been with him for some time he asked her, "Do you know how long you have been here?"

"No," she said, "I haven't been thinking about time at all."

"All the better," said the bear. "It's been exactly one year. Get ready for a journey, for we must visit your father once again."

She did so with great joy, and after arriving at her father's she told him all about her life in the castle. Afterward, when she was taking leave from him, he secretly gave her some matches that the bear was not supposed to see. But the bear did see them, and he growled angrily, "Stop that, or I'll eat you."

Then he took his wife back to the castle, and they lived there together as before.

Some time later the bear said, "Do you know how long you have been here?"

"No," she said, "I don't notice the time."

"All the better," said the bear. "You have been here exactly two years. Get ready for a journey. It is time for us to visit your father once again."

She did it once again, and everything happened as the first time. But when she visited her father the third time, the bear failed to see that her father secretly gave her some matches. After arriving back at the castle, she could hardly wait for night to come when the bear was sleeping next to her in bed. Silently she struck a light and was startled with amazement and joy, for next to her was lying a handsome youth with a golden crown on his head.

He smiled at her and said, "Many thanks for redeeming me. You were the wife of an enchanted prince. Now we can celebrate our wedding properly, for now I am the king of this land." With that the entire castle came alive. Servants and attendants came from all sides, wishing good luck to the king and the queen.

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- Source: Otto Sutermeister, "Der Bärenprinz," *Kinder- und Hausmärchen aus der Schweiz* (Aarau: H. R. Sauerländer, 1873), no. 37, pp. 112-15.
- Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 1998.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## Beauty and the Beast

### Basque

As there are many in the world in its state now, there was a king who had three daughters. He used continually to bring handsome presents to his two elder daughters, but did not pay any attention at all to his youngest daughter, and yet she was the prettiest and most amiable.

The king kept going from fair to fair, and from feast to feast, and from everywhere he used to bring something for the two eldest daughters. One day, when he was going to a feast, he said to his youngest daughter, "I never bring anything home for you. Tell me then what you want and you shall have it."

She said to her father, "And I do not want anything."

"Yes, yes, I am going to bring you something."

"Very well then, bring me a flower."

He goes off, and is busy buying and buying; for one a hat, for the other a beautiful piece of stuff for a dress, and for the first again a shawl; and he was returning home, when in passing before a beautiful castle, he sees a garden quite full of flowers, and he says to himself, "What! I was going home without a flower for my daughter; here I shall have plenty of them."

He takes some then, and as soon, as he has done so, a voice says to him, "Who gave you permission to take that flower? As you have three daughters, if you do not bring me one of them before the year be finished, you shall be burnt wherever you are -- you, and your whole kingdom."

The king goes off home. He gives his elder daughters their presents, and her nosegay to the youngest. She thanks her father. After a certain time this king became sad. His eldest daughter said to him, "What is the matter with you ?"

He says to her, "If one of my daughters will not go to such a spot before the end of the year, I shall be burned."

His eldest daughter answers him, "Be burned if you like; as for me, I shall not go. I have no wish at all to go there. Settle it with the others."

The second also asks him, "You seem very sad, papa; what is the matter with you?"

He told her how he is bound to send one of his daughters to such a place before the end of the year, otherwise he should be burned.

This one too says to him, "Manage your own business as you like, but do not reckon upon me."

The youngest, after some days, said to him, "What is the matter with you, father, that you are so sad? Has someone done you some hurt?"

He said to her, "When I went to get your nosegay, a voice said to me, 'I must have one of your daughters before the year be completed,' and now I do not knew what I must do. It told me that I shall be burned."

This daughter said to him, "My father, do not be troubled about it. I will go."

And she sets out immediately in a carriage. She arrives at the castle and goes in, and she hears music and sounds of rejoicing everywhere, and yet she did not see anyone. She finds her chocolate ready (in the morning), and her dinner the same. She goes to bed, and still she does not see anyone.

The next morning a voice says to her, "Shut your eyes; I wish to place my head on your knees for a moment."

"Come, come; I am not afraid."

There appears then an enormous serpent. Without intending it, the young lady could not help giving a little shudder. An instant after the serpent went away; and the young lady lived very happily, without lacking anything. One day the voice asked her if she did not wish to go home.

She answers, "I am very happy here. I have no longing for it."

"Yes, if you like, you may go for three days."

He gives her a ring, and says to her, "If that changes colour, I shall be ill, and if it turns to blood, I shall be in great misery."

The young lady sets out for her father's house. Her father was very glad (to see her). Her sisters said to her, "You must be happy there. You are prettier than you were before. With whom do you live there?"

She told them, "With a serpent."

They would not believe her. The three days flew by like a dream, and she forgot her serpent. The fourth day she looked at her ring, and she saw that it was changed. She rubs it with her finger, and it begins to bleed. Seeing that she goes running to her father, and says to him that she is going. She arrives at the castle, and finds everything sad. The music will not play -- everything was shut up. She called the serpent (his name was Azor, and hers Fifine). She kept on calling and crying out for him, but Azor appeared nowhere. After having searched the whole house, after having taken off her shoes, she goes to the garden, and there too she cries out.

She finds a corner of the earth in the garden quite frozen, and immediately she makes a great fire over this spot, and there Azor comes out, and he says to her, "You had forgotten me, then. If you had not made this fire, it would have been all up with me."

Fifine said to him, "Yes, I had forgotten you, but the ring made me think of you."

Azor said to her, "I knew what was going to happen; that is why I gave you the ring."

And coming into the house, she finds it as before, all full of rejoicings -- the music was playing on all sides.

Some days after that Azor said to her, "You must marry me."

Fifine gives no answer. He asks her again like that three times, and still she remained silent, silent. The whole house becomes sad again. She has no more her meals ready. Again Azor asks her if she will marry him. Still she does not answer, and she remains like that in darkness several days without eating anything, and she said to herself, "Whatever it shall cost me I must say yes."

When the serpent asks her again, "Will you marry me?" she answers, "Not with the serpent, but with the man."

As soon as she had said that the music begins as before. Azor says to her that she must go to her father's house and get all things ready that are necessary, and they will marry the next day. The young lady goes as he had told her. She says to her father that she is going to be married to the serpent tomorrow, (and asks him) if he will prepare everything for that. The father consents, but he is vexed. Her sisters, too, ask her whom she is going to marry, and they are astounded at hearing that it is with a serpent.

Fifine goes back again, and Azor says to her, "Which would you prefer, from the house to the church, serpent, or from the church to the house, serpent?"

Fifine says to him, "From the house to the church, serpent."

Azor says to her, "I, too."

A beautiful carriage comes to the door. The serpent gets in, and Fifine places herself at his side, and when they arrive at the king's house the serpent says to her, "Shut the doors and the curtains, that nobody may see."

Fifine says to him, "But they will see you as you get down."

"No matter; shut them all the same."

She goes to her father. Her father comes with all his court to fetch the serpent. He opens the door, and who is astonished ? Why, everybody. Instead of a serpent there is a charming young man; and they all go to the church.

When they come out there is a grand dinner at the king's, but the bridegroom says to his wife, "Today we must not make a feast at all. We have a great business to do in the house; we will come another day for the feast."

She told that to her father, and they go on to their house. When they are come there her husband brings her in a large basket a serpent's skin, and says to her, "You will make a great fire, and when you hear the first stroke of midnight you will throw this serpent's skin into the fire. That must be burnt up, and you must throw the ashes out of window before the last stroke of twelve has ceased striking. If you do not do that I shall be wretched forever."

The lady says to him, "Certainly; I will do everything that I can to succeed."

She begins before midnight to make the fire. As soon as she heard the first stroke she throws the serpent's skin on the fire, and takes two spits and stirs the fire, and moves about the skin and burns it, till ten strokes have gone. Then she takes a shovel, and throws the ashes outside as the last twelfth stroke is ending.

Then a terrible voice says, "I curse your cleverness, and what you have just done."

At the same time her husband comes in. He did not know where he was for joy. He kisses her, and does not know how to tell his wife what great good she has done him.

"Now I do not fear anything. If you had not done as I told you, I should have been enchanted for twenty-one years more. Now it is all over, and we will go at our ease tomorrow to your father's house for the wedding feast."

They go the next day and enjoy themselves very much. They return to their palace to take away the handsomest things, because they did not wish to stop any more in that corner of the mountain. They load all their valuable things in carts and waggons, and go to live with the king. This young lady has four children, two boys and two girls, and as her sisters were very jealous of her, their father sent them out of the house. The king gave his crown to his son-in-law, who was already a son of a king. As they had lived well, they died well too.

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- Source: Wentworth Webster, *Basque Legends*, 2nd edition (London: Griffith and Farran, 1879), pp. 167-72.
- Webster's source: Estefanella Hirigaray.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## Zelinda and the Monster

### Italy

There was once a poor man who had three daughters; and as the youngest was the fairest and most civil, and had the best disposition, her other two sisters envied her with a deadly envy, although her father, on the contrary, loved her dearly. It happened that in a neighboring town, in the month of January, there was a great fair, and that poor man was obliged to go there to lay in the provisions necessary for the support of his family; and before departing he asked his three daughters if they would like some small presents in proportion, you understand, to his means. Rosina wished a dress, Marietta a shawl, but Zelinda was satisfied with a handsome rose.

The poor man set out on his journey early the next day, and when he arrived at the fair quickly bought what he needed, and afterward easily found Rosina's dress and Marietta's shawl; but at that season he could not find a rose for his Zelinda, although he took great pains in looking everywhere for one. However, anxious to please his dear Zelinda, he took the first road he came to, and after journeying a while arrived at a handsome garden enclosed by high walls; but as the gate was partly open he entered softly. He found the garden filled with every kind of flowers and plants, and in a corner was a tall rosebush full of beautiful rosebuds. Wherever he looked no living soul appeared from whom he might ask a rose as a gift or for money, so the poor man, without thinking, stretched out his hand, and picked a rose for his Zelinda.

Mercy! Scarcely had he pulled the flower from the stalk when there arose a great noise, and flames darted from the earth, and all at once there appeared a terrible monster with the figure of a dragon, and hissed with all his might, and cried out, enraged at that poor Christian, "Rash man! what have you done? Now you must die at once, for you have had the audacity to touch and destroy my rosebush."

The poor man, more than half dead with terror, began to weep and beg for mercy on his knees, asking pardon for the fault he had committed, and told why he had picked the rose; and then he added, "Let me depart; I have a family, and if I am killed they will go to destruction"

But the monster, more wicked than ever, responded, "Listen; one must die. Either bring me the girl that asked for the rose or I will kill you this very moment." It was impossible to move him by prayers or lamentations; the monster persisted in his decision, and did not let the poor man go until he had sworn to bring him there in the garden his daughter Zelinda.

Imagine how downhearted that poor man returned home! He gave his oldest daughters their presents and Zelinda her rose; but his face was distorted and as white as though he had arisen from the dead; so that the girls, in terror, asked him what had happened and whether he had met with any misfortune. They were urgent, and at last the poor man, weeping bitterly, related the misfortunes of that unhappy journey and on what condition he had been able finally to return home. "In short," he exclaimed, "either Zelinda or I must be eaten alive by the monster."

Then the two sisters emptied the vials of their wrath on Zelinda. "Just see," they said, "that affected, capricious girl! She shall go to the monster! She who wanted roses at this season. No, indeed! Papa must stay with us. The stupid creature!"

At all these taunts Zelinda, without growing angry, simply said, "It is right that the one who has caused the misfortune should pay for it. I will go to the monster's. Yes, Papa, take me to the garden, and the Lord's will be done."

The next day Zelinda and her sorrowful father began their journey and at nightfall arrived at the garden gate. When they entered they saw as usual no one, but they beheld a lordly palace all lighted and the doors wide open. When the two travelers entered the vestibule, suddenly four marble statues, with lighted torches in their hands, descended from their pedestals, and accompanied them up the stairs to a large hall where a table was lavishly spread. The travelers were very hungry, sat down and began to eat without ceremony; and when they had finished, the same statues conducted them to two handsome chambers for the night. Zelinda and her father were so weary that they slept like dormice all night.

At daybreak Zelinda and her father arose, and were served with everything for breakfast by invisible hands. Then they descended to the garden, and began to seek the monster. When they came to the rosebush he appeared in all his frightful ugliness. Zelinda, on seeing him, became pale with fear, and her limbs trembled, but the monster regarded her attentively with his great fiery eyes, and afterward said to the poor man, "Very well; you have kept your word, and I am satisfied. Now depart and leave me alone here with the young girl."

At this command the old man thought he should die; and Zelinda, too, stood there half stupefied and her eyes full of tears; but entreaties were of no avail; the monster remained as obdurate as a stone, and the poor man was obliged to depart, leaving his dear Zelinda in the monster's power.

When the monster was alone with Zelinda he began to caress her, and make loving speeches to her, and managed to appear quite civil. There was no danger of his forgetting her, and he saw that she wanted nothing, and every day, talking with her in the garden, he asked her, "Do you love me, Zelinda? Will you be my wife?"

The young girl always answered him in the same way, "I like you, sir, but I will never be your wife."

Then the monster appeared very sorrowful, and redoubled his caresses and attentions, and, sighing deeply, said, "But you see, Zelinda, if you should marry me wonderful things would happen. What they are I cannot tell you until you will be my wife."

Zelinda, although in her heart not dissatisfied with that beautiful place and with being treated like a queen, still did not feel at all like marrying the monster, because he was too ugly and looked like a beast, and always answered his requests in the same manner.

One day, however, the monster called Zelinda in haste, and said, "Listen, Zelinda; if you do not consent to marry me it is fated that your father must die. He is ill and near the end of his life, and you will not be able even to see him again. See whether I am telling you the truth." And, drawing out an enchanted mirror, the monster showed Zelinda her father on his deathbed.

At that spectacle Zelinda, in despair and half mad with grief, cried, "Oh, save my father, for mercy's sake! Let me be able to embrace him once more before he dies. Yes, yes, I promise you I will be your faithful and constant wife, and that without delay. But save my father from death."

Scarcely had Zelinda uttered these words when suddenly the monster was transformed into a very handsome youth. Zelinda was astounded by this unexpected change, and the young man took her by the hand, and said, "Know, dear Zelinda, that I am the son of the King of the Oranges. An old witch, touching me, changed me into the terrible monster I was, and condemned me to be hidden in this rosebush until a beautiful girl consented to become my wife."

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- Source: Thomas Frederick Crane, *Italian Popular Tales* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1885), no. 2, pp. 7-11.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Snake-Prince

### Greece

> Scarlet thread, spun on the wheel,
> Twisting on the twirling reel,
> Like the dancers turn and spin,
> While I now my tale begin!

Once upon a time there was a merchant, and he traded "all the way to Bagdad," as the saying is. He had twelve ships which sailed to foreign countries, and he had besides three pretty daughters.

Well, as time went on, luck turned against the merchant. His wife died; one by one he lost his ships; and every year he became poorer and poorer. At last he had lost all his property with the exception of one farm, and he went to live there with his daughters. As they had now no money to hire laborers, the merchant told the girls that they must set to and work on the farm in order that they might gain a living.

"We cannot do farm work," replied the two eldest, tossing their heads. "We are not accustomed to it."

But the youngest, whose name was Rosa, loved her father very dearly; and she at once prepared to do as he wished. So she set to with a will, and digged in the garden, and raked, and planted; and when the fruits and vegetables were grown she rose early in the morning to gather them for her father to carry to market.

Time passed, and after many months tidings came to the merchant that three of his belated ships had come into port laden with costly goods, when he immediately prepared to go to the city. But before mounting his horse, he asked his daughters what each desired as a present.

The two elder begged for fine silken gowns; but when he asked the youngest, she said, "I want nothing, papa mine, now that I see you released from your poverty." And when her father pressed her, she said, "Well, then, papa mine, bring me a rose, a beautiful, sweet-smelling damask rose."

So the merchant set off for the port, and landed his goods. In twelve days' time he had sold them all save the two silken gowns which he had kept for his daughters; but he had found no rose for the youngest.

As he was riding home to his farm, it began to rain so heavily that when they came to the open gateway of a house by the wayside, his horse trotted through it into the courtyard. There was no one about, so he put the horse in the stable, and went up to the house. The door stood wide open, so he walked in and sate himself down on a seat in the hall. At once he found by his side coffee and sweetmeats, and a long pipe filled with fragrant tobacco, without his seeing who had brought them.

Presently the rain ceased, and the merchant arose and went from chamber to chamber to seek the host and thank him for the shelter and entertainment. Finding no one, however, he was going forth to take his beast from the stable and continue his journey, when, as he crossed the courtyard, he caught sight of a bush of damask roses which had three blossoms on one stem.

No sooner, however, had he stretched out his hand and plucked them than there appeared at his feet a snake, which said, "Ah, thankless man! After I have opened my doors to save thee from the storm, canst not see a rose or two without desiring and plucking them?"

"I sought through the chambers to find the host and say a "Thank you" to him, but found him not," the merchant replied.

"Listen to me," then said the snake. "Thou hast three daughters, and thou must bring me the youngest. Think not to thyself that I am only a snake, and cannot come and find thee if thou dost not my bidding."

The poor man asked how many days' grace he would give him; and he granted him forty days.

At last he got home to his house; his daughters gathered round him; and when the two eldest had got their gowns he gave the roses to the youngest, and then sat down weeping.

"What is the matter, papa mine, that you weep?" she asked, anxiously.

Then, as the merchant related his adventure, Rosa's sisters began to reproach her, and point their fingers at her, saying, "Wretched girl that thou art! A gown was not good enough for thee, but thou must have a damask rose, forsooth, that the snake might come and destroy us!"

When her father had also told them of the forty days' grace, Rosa went to her chamber and wrote down the date; and she did not seem at all troubled, though her sisters were continually reproaching her.

On the thirty-eighth day she went to her father and said, "Papa mine, saddle now the horse so that we may go where I am invited."

"Can I take thee, my darling child, to the snake who will destroy thee?" cried the unhappy man.

"The snake will not destroy me, if I do his bidding," replied Rosa. "What ill-will can he have against me? Arise, and let us be gone."

She bade farewell to her sisters; and she and her father set out, and on the fortieth day they arrived at the snake's abode. The gate was open, as before, and when the merchant had stabled his horse he led his daughter into the house, and they sate them down.

Soon came coffee and sweets, as before, without anyone being seen; and in a little while the snake appeared and said to the merchant, "So thou hast done my bidding and brought thy daughter?"

"Yea, I have brought her, as I promised," he replied; but when he had kissed and embraced his daughter, he mounted his horse and rode home again. But in a few days he fell ill with grief and took to his bed. So the poor girl was left alone with the snake.

And it became the snake's custom, every day when she was taking her coffee after dinner, to climb into her lap and ask her, "Wilt thou take me for thy husband?"

And she would reply, "But I am afraid of thee."

And she was very sad and lonely because her father did not come to see her as he had promised. Well, one day, as she was sitting at the table, it suddenly opened before her and disclosed a mirror in which all the world was reflected; and, when she saw in it her father lying ill in bed, she began to weep and tear her hair.

The snake, who was in the garden, hearing her cries and her breast-beatings, hurried to her and asked, "What ails thee, my Rose?"

"See in the mirror," she cried, "how my father lies nigh unto death!"

Then said the snake, "Open the table drawer and thou wilt find a ring. Put it on thy finger, and tell me how many days thou wilt be absent?"

"I will come back," she replied, "as soon as my father recovers."

"Well, I will give thee thirty-one days' leave. If thou come one day later, thou wilt find me dead on some mound in the garden."

"Do thyself no harm," said the girl. "When my leave has expired I will return to thee."

The snake ordered supper to be served, and when she had eaten, he said, "Put the ring on thy tongue, and thou wilt find thyself at home in thy chamber."

Rosa lay down, put the ring on her tongue, and closed her eyes. Her father's servants, passing the door of her chamber, heard her breathing, and ran to tell their young mistresses, who hastened in and found her asleep on her bed. The maiden awoke, and when she found that she was indeed at home again she praised God.

Her father was rejoiced to see his Rosa again, and asked her many questions about her life with the snake. When she told him what the snake had said to her every day at dinner time, and that she had replied, "But I am afraid of thee," he said to her, "My daughter dear, the next time he asks thee that question, do thou answer, "Yea, I will take thee!" and we shall see what will hap."

And she promised to say this. Her sisters, however, tried to persuade her not to go back, so that the snake might die and they would be rid of him.

But Rosa was indignant, and replied, "How could I leave my beast to die, who have received such help from him?"

So she remained with her father, whose joy she was, for as many days as she had leave. Then, bidding him and her sisters farewell, she lay down on her bed, put the ring in her mouth, and went back to the snake.

When he saw her, he said, "Ah, thou hast come back to me, my Rose!"

And after dinner, when coffee was served, and he lay in her lap as before and asked, "Wilt thou take me for thy husband?" she replied, "Yea, I will take thee!"

When she had said these words the snake's skin fell off him, and he became a handsome prince. And the table again opened and all the world was seen therein. Then Rosa asked him what manner of man he was, and how he had become a snake. And he told her how that he had fallen under the spell of an enchantress who had changed him into a snake, and had doomed him to retain that shape until he should find a maiden who would consent to marry him.

"But now," he said, "I will return to my kingdom. Thy father and sisters shall be conveyed thither, and then we will hold our wedding."

So they were married, and the prince made his father-in-law his grand vizier. And we will leave them well, and return and find them better -- God be praised!

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- Source: Lucy M. J. Garnett, *Greek Wonder Tales* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1913), , no. 11, pp. 180-88.
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Enchanted Tsarévich

### Russia

Once upon a time there was a merchant who had three daughters. It so happened he had one day to go to strange countries to buy wares, and so he asked his daughters, "What shall I bring you from beyond the seas?"

The eldest asked for a new coat, and the next one also asked for a new coat; but the youngest one only took a sheet of paper and sketched a flower on it. "Bring me, *bátyushka* [father], a flower like this!"

So the merchant went and made a long journey to foreign kingdoms, but he could never see such a flower. So he came back home, and he saw on his way a splendid lofty palace with watchtowers, turrets, and a garden. He went a walk in the garden, and you cannot imagine how many trees he saw and flowers, every flower fairer than the other flowers. And then he looked and he saw a single one like the one which his daughter had sketched.

"Oh," he said, "I will tear off and bring this to my beloved daughter; evidently there is nobody here to watch me."

So he ran up and broke it off, and as soon as he had done it, in that very instant a boisterous wind arose and thunder thundered, and a fearful monster stood in front of him, a formless, winged snake with three heads. "How dared you play the master in my garden!" cried the snake to the merchant. "Why have you broken off a blossom?"

The merchant was frightened, fell on his knees and besought pardon.

"Very well," said the snake, "I will forgive you, but on condition that whoever meets you first, when you reach home, you must give me for all eternity; and, if you deceive me, do not forget, nobody can ever hide himself from me. I shall find you wherever you are."

The merchant agreed to the condition and came back home. And the youngest daughter saw him from the window and ran out to meet him. Then the merchant hung his head, looked at his beloved daughter, and began to shed bitter tears.

"What is the matter with you? Why are you weeping, *bátyushka*?"

He gave her the blossom and told what had befallen him.

"Do not grieve, *bátyushka* ," said the youngest daughter. "It is God's gift. Perhaps I shall fare well. Take me to the snake."

So the father took her away, set her in the palace, bade farewell, and set out home. Then the fair maiden, the daughter of the merchant, went in the different rooms, and beheld everywhere gold and velvet; but no one was there to be seen, not a single human soul.

Time went by and went by, and the fair damsel became hungry and thought, "Oh, if I could only have something to eat!" But before ever she had thought, in front of her stood a table, and on the table were dishes and drinks and refreshments. The only thing that was not there was birds' milk. Then she sat down to the table, drank and ate, got up, and it had all vanished.

Darkness now came on, and the merchant's daughter went into the bedroom, wishing to lie down and sleep. Then a boisterous wind rustled round and the three- headed snake appeared in front of her.

"Hail, fair maiden! Put my bed outside this door!"

So the fair maiden put the bed outside the door and herself lay on the bedstead.

She awoke in the morning, and again in the entire house there was not a single soul to be seen. And it all went well with her. Whatever she wished for appeared on the spot.

In the evening the snake flew to her and ordered, "Now, fair maiden, put my bed next to your bedstead."

She then laid it next to her bedstead, and the night went by, and the maiden awoke, and again there was never a soul in the palace.

And for the third time the snake came in the evening and said, "Now, fair maiden, I am going to lie with you in the bedstead."

The merchant's daughter was fearfully afraid of lying on a single bed with such a formless monster. But she could not help herself, so she strengthened her heart and lay down with him.

In the morning the serpent said to her, "If you are now weary, fair maiden, go to your father and your sisters. Spend a day with them, and in the evening come back to me. But see to it that you are not late. If you are one single minute late I shall die of grief."

"No, I shall not be late," said the maiden, the merchant's daughter, and descended the steps; there was a barouche ready for her, and she sat down. That very instant she arrived at her father's courtyard.

Then the father saw, welcomed, kissed her, and asked her, "How has God been dealing with you, my beloved daughter ? Has it been well with you?"

"Very well, father!" And she started telling of all the wealth there was in the palace, how the snake loved her, how whatever she only thought of was in that instant fulfilled.

The sisters heard, and did not know what to do out of sheer envy.

Now the day was ebbing away, and the fair maiden made ready to go back, and was bidding farewell to her father and her sisters, saying, "This is the time I must go back. I was bidden keep to my term."

But the envious sisters rubbed onions on their eyes and made as though they were weeping: "Do not go away, sister; stay until tomorrow."

She was very sorry for her sisters, and stayed one day more.

In the morning she bade farewell to them all and went to the palace. When she arrived it was as empty as before. She went into the garden, and she saw the serpent lying dead in the pond! He had thrown himself for sheer grief into the water.

"Oh, my God, what have I done!" cried out the fair maiden, and she wept bitter tears, ran. up to the pond, hauled the snake out of the water, embraced one head and kissed it with all her might. And the snake trembled, and in a minute turned into a good youth.

"I thank you, fair maiden," he said. "You have saved me from the greatest misfortune. I am no snake, but an enchanted prince."

Then they went back to the merchant's house, were betrothed, lived long, and lived for good and happy things.

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- Source: Leonard A. Magnus, *Russian Folk-Tales* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1916), pp. 283-86.
- Magnus' source is the great collection of Alexander Afanasyev (1826-1871).
- Return to the table of contents.

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## The Fairy Serpent

### China

Once there was a man who had three daughters, of whom he was devotedly fond. They were skilful in embroidery; and he used every day on his way home from work to gather some flowers for them to use as patterns.

One day when he found no flowers along his route homeward he went into the woods to look for wild blossoms, and he unwittingly invaded the domain of a fairy serpent, that coiled around him, held him tightly, and railed at him for having entered his garden. The man excused himself, saying that he came merely to get a few flowers for his daughters, who would be sorely disappointed were he to go home without his usual gift to them.

The snake asked him the number, the names, and the ages of his daughters, and then refused to let him go unless he promised one of them in marriage to him.

The poor man tried every argument he could think of to induce the snake to release him upon easier terms, but the reptile would accept no other ransom. At last the father, dreading greater evil to his daughters should they be deprived of hi protection, gave the required promise and went home. He could eat no supper, however, for he knew the power of fairies to afflict those who offend them, and he was full of anxiety concerning the misfortunes that must overwhelm his whole family should the compact be disregarded.

Some days passed; his daughters carefully prepared his meals, and affectionately besought him to eat them, but he would not come to the table. He was always plunged in sorrowful meditation.

They conferred among themselves as to the cause of his uncommon behavior, and, having decided that one of them must have displeased him, they agreed to try to find out which one it might be, by going separately, each in turn, to urge him to eat.

The eldest went, expressed her distress at his loss of appetite, and urged him to partake of food.

He replied that he would do so if she would for his sake marry the snake to whom he had promised a wife.

She bluntly refused to carry out her father's contract, and left him in deeper trouble than before.

The second daughter then went to beg him to take food, received the same reply, and likewise declined meeting the engagement he had made.

The youngest daughter then went and entreated him to eat, heard his story, and at once declared that, if he would care for his own health properly, she would become the bride of the serpent. The father therefore took his meals again, the days sped without bringing calamity, and the welfare of the family for a time seemed secure.

But one morning, as the girls were sitting at their embroidery, a wasp flew into the room and sang:

> "Buzz! I buzz and come the faster;
> Who will wed the snake, my master?

Whenever the wasp alighted the girls prodded him with their needles, and followed him up so closely that he had to flee for his life. The next morning two wasps came, singing the same refrain; the third morning three wasps came; and the number of wasps increased day by day, until the girls could no longer put them to rout, nor endure their stings.

Then the youngest said that, in order to relieve the family of the buzzing plague, she would go to her uncanny bridegroom. The wasps accompanied her on the road, and guided her into the woods where the fairy serpent awaited her in a palace that he had built for her reception. There were spacious rooms with carved furniture inlaid with precious stones, chests full of silken fabrics, caskets of jade, and jewels of gold.

The snake had beautiful eyes and a musical voice; but his skin was warty, and the girl shuddered at the thought of daily seeing him about. After the wedding supper, at which the two sat alone, the girl told her spouse that she appreciated the excellence of all that he had provided for her, and that she should perform all her domestic duties exactly. For many days she kept the house neat, cooked the food, and made all things pleasant for her repulsive bridegroom. He doted upon her, and pined whenever she was out of his sight. So heedful was he of her wishes and her welfare, that she grew to like his companionship, and to feel a great lonesomeness whenever he was absent.

Having no help in her household work, she was, one day, on finding the well dried up, obliged to go into the forest in search of water, which she finally discovered and toilsomely brought back from a distant spring. On returning she found the snake dying of thirst, and in her eagerness to save his life she grasped and plunged him into the water, from which he rose transformed, a strong and handsome man. He had been the subject of wicked enchantment, from which her dutiful quest and gracious pity set him free. Thereafter she often with her admirable husband visited her old home and carried gifts to those who were less happy than she.

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- Source: Adele M. Fielde, *Chinese Nights Entertainment* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1893), pp. 45-41.
- Fielde's source: "These tales have been heard or overheard by the writer, as they were told in the Swatow vernacular, by persons who could not read."
- Return to the table of contents.

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## Links to related sites

### Additional tales about animal brides and bridegrooms

- Animal Brides. Tales of type 402.
- Animal Brides and Animal Bridegrooms: Tales Told by North American Indians.
- Beauty and the Beast, by Jeanne-Marie LePrince de Beaumont.
- Cupid and Psyche, by Lucius Apuleius.
- East of the Sun and West of the Moon. A classic animal bridegroom tale from the Norwegian collection of Asbjørnsen and Moe.
- Frog Kings. Folktales of type 440 about slimy suitors.
- The Frog King; or, Iron Heinrich by the Brothers Grimm. A comparison of the versions of 1812 and 1857.
- Hog Bridegrooms. Tales of type 441.
- Monkey Bridegrooms. Folktales from India, The Philippines, and French Louisiana).
- The Singing, Springing Lark, by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm.
- Snake and Serpent Husbands. Folktales of type 433C and related stories.

### External sites

- Beauty and the Beast, an article from *Wikipedia*, the free encyclopedia.
- D. L. Ashliman's **folktexts**, a library of folktales, folklore, fairy tales, and mythology.
- Return to the table of contents.

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